

Prepared from
FORM PTO-1390Transmittal Letter to the United States
Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US)

Page 1

Attorney's Docket No.:	GK-ZEI-3075	
U.S. Application No.:	097462961	
International Application No.:	PCT/EP99/03070	
International Filing Date:	MAY 5, 1999	5 MAY 1999
Priority Date Claimed:	MAY 18, 1998	18 MAY 1998
Title of Invention:	ILLUMINATION ARRANGEMENT FOR A STEREO MICROSCOPE (Beleuchtungsanordnung für ein Steromikroskop)	
Applicant(s) for (DO/EO/US):	Johannes KNOBLICH	

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

- [X] 1. This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
- [] 2. This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
- [] 3. This express request to begin national examination procedures [35 U.S.C. 371 (f)] at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set forth in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and
- [] 4. A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
- [X] 5. A copy of the International Application as filed [35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)]
- a) ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau)
- b) ☐ has been transmitted by the International Bureau
- c) ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US)
- [] 6. A translation of the International Application into English [35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)] **TO FOLLOW**
- [] 7. Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 [35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)]
- a) ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau)
- b) ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau
- c) ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has **NOT** expired.
- d) ☐ have not been made and will not be made
- [] 8. A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 [35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)]
- [] 9. An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) [35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)] **TO FOLLOW**
- [] 10. A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 [35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)]

Items 11. to 16. below concern other document(s) or information included:

- [X] 11. An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98
- [] 12. An Assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet (PTO-1595) in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
- [] 13. — A **FIRST** preliminary amendment
- A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment
- [] 14. A substitute specification
- [] 15. A change of power of attorney and/or address letter
- [X] 16. (other items or information) **PCT/RO/101, GERMAN TEXT as filed, PCT/RO/105, PCT/ISA/210, PTO-1449 and 4 cited references.**

EXPRESS MAIL No.: EM 165 843 873 US

Deposited: January 14, 2000

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service Express mail under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to: BOX PCT, Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

/Ruth Montalvo Date: January 14, 2000

U.S. Application No. (if known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.50):
 International Application No.: PCT/EP99/03070

Attorney's Docket No: GK-ZEI-3075

CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY

[X] 17. The following fees are submitted:

BASIC NATIONAL FEE [37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)]

[X]	Search Report has been prepared by the EPO or JPO.....	\$	840.00
[]	International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO [37 CFR 1.482].....	\$	670.00
[]	No International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO [37 CFR 1.482] but International search fee paid to USPTO [37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)].....	\$	690.00
[]	Neither International preliminary examination fee [37 CFR 1.482] nor International search fee [37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)] paid to USPTO.....	\$	970.00
[]	International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO [37 CFR 1.482] and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4).....	\$	96.00

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT: \$ 840.00

Claims

Number
filed

-20

Number
extra

Rate

Total Claims
Indep. Claims

x \$ 18. =
x \$ 78. =

[] Multiple Dependent Claim(s) (if applicable) + \$260. =

TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS: \$ 840.00

Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than [] 20 [] 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date [37 CFR 1.492(e)]

TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS: \$ 840.00

Reduction by 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. Verified Small Entity Statement must be filed. [Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28]

\$.00

SUBTOTAL: \$ 840.00

Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English Translation later than [] 20 [] 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date [37 CFR 1.492(f)]

TO FOLLOW \$ 0.00

TOTAL NATIONAL FEE: \$ 840.00

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment [37 CFR 1.21(h)] The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (PTO-1595) [37 CFR 3.28, 3.31]. \$ 40.00 per property +

\$.00

TOTAL FEE(S): \$ 840.00

AMOUNTS TO BE
REFUNDED OR CHARGED

REFUNDED
CHARGED \$

(Please note the filing fee is based on the claims in the Preliminary Amendment)

[X] Check in the amount of \$ 840.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed. (The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees required with this submission or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No: 13-0025.)

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 36 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive [37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)] must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

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25,116

Reg. No.

January 14, 2000

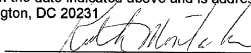
Date

09/462961

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Deposited: April 10, 2000

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/ Ruth Montalvo**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Docket No.: GK-ZEI-3075

Applicant(s): Johannes Knoblich

Serial No.: 09/462,961 (Nat'l Ph. of PCT/EP99/03070 Group:

Filed: Examiner:

For: ILLUMINATION ARRANGEMENT FOR A STEREO MICROSCOPE

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents

Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to issuance of a first Office Action in the above-identified application,
please amend this application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, line 1, after the title line insert the headings:

~~--BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--~~;

--a) Field of the Invention--; after this line insert the following
paragraph:

--The invention relates to an illumination arrangement for
a stereo microscope.--;

line 2, before this line insert the heading:

--b) Description of the Related Art--;

Page 5, line 10, after this line insert the heading:

--OBJECT AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--;

line 11, after "It is the" insert --primary--;

line 17, delete this line;

line 18, delete this line and insert the following paragraph:

This object is met in an illumination arrangement for a stereo
microscope, preferably a Greenough type stereo microscope,
comprising at least one, preferably two, illumination channels which
are arranged in a plane which is arranged essentially orthogonally
with respect to the plane of the two reservation channels, preferably
with two light channels in the interior of the microscope housing
outside of the observation beam paths, wherein the light channels
are guided around the observation optics.--;

line 20, after this line insert the heading:

--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS--;

after this line insert the paragraph:

--In the drawings:--;

last line, after "for illumination." insert --and--;

Page 6, line 2, after this line insert the heading:

--DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS--;

Page 11, last line, after this line insert the following paragraph:

--While the foregoing description and drawings represent the present invention, it will be obvious to those skilled in the art that various changes may be made therein without departing from the true spirit and scope of the present invention.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Preceding "1." change "Patent Claims" to --What is claimed is--.

Cancel claims 1-19 and add the following claims 20-39, reading as follows:

--20. An illumination arrangement for a stereo microscope, in particular, a Greenough type stereo microscope, comprising:

at least one illumination channel which is arranged in a plane which is arranged essentially orthogonally with respect to the plane of the observation channel.

21. An illumination arrangement for a stereo microscope, in particular a Greenough type stereo microscope comprising:

two illumination channels which are arranged in a plane which is arranged essentially orthogonally with respect to the plane of the two observation channels.

22. The illumination arrangement according to claim 21, in a Greenough type stereo microscope with two light channels in the interior of the microscope housing outside of the observation beam paths.

23. The illumination arrangement according to claim 21, wherein the light channels are guided around the observation optics.

24. The illumination arrangement according to claim 21, wherein the illumination direction is carried out at an angle to the optical axis of the microscope, so that no direct light falls in the observation channels.

25. The illumination arrangement according to claim 20, wherein the illumination is carried out via at least one light guide.

26. The illumination arrangement according to claim 25, wherein the light guide is a flexible glass light guide and/or plastic light guide and/or fluid light guide.

27. The illumination arrangement according to claim 25, wherein the light guide extends at least partially in the interior of the microscope housing.

28. The illumination arrangement according to claim 25, wherein the

illumination is carried out via the light guide ends.

29. The illumination arrangement according to claim 25, wherein the illumination is carried out via illumination optics arranged following the light guide end.

30. The illumination arrangement according to claim 29, wherein the illumination optics are arranged so as to be adjustable and/or displaceable and/or swivelable with respect to the image scale as zoom system.

31. The illumination arrangement according to claim 29, wherein a hand-actuated and/or motor-operated control is provided for adjusting the illumination optics.

32. The illumination arrangement according to claim 29, wherein, when the illumination optics are adjusted as a zoom system, the adjustment being coupled to the adjustment of the microscope zoom system.

33. The illumination arrangement according to claim 25, wherein the illumination is carried out via a light guide which branches to generate the two light channels.

34. The illumination arrangement according to claim 33, wherein the branching takes place entirely within the microscope housing.

35. The illumination arrangement according to claim 33, wherein the branches of the light guide are guided around the observation channels.

36. The illumination arrangement according to claim 25, wherein the light guide is connected with a cold-light source arranged outside of the microscope.

37. The illumination arrangement according to claim 21, wherein a fluorescence excitation is carried out via the illumination channels.

38. The illumination arrangement according to claim 37, wherein at least one light guide is connected with a light source which is arranged outside of the microscope and which is suitable for fluorescence excitations in combination with exchangeable excitation filters.

39. The illumination arrangement according to claim 37, wherein a filter holder for excitation filters is provided between the light source and the light guide and a filter holder for blocking filters is provided in the observation beam path.--

IN THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Page 15, line 1, change "Abstract" to --ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE--;

line 2, change "Illumination" to --An illumination--.

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 have been cancelled and new claims 20-37 have been added.

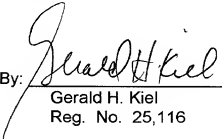
These new claims have been added to amend the form of the previous claims and to eliminate multiple dependencies in order to reduce the filing fee.

The specification and Abstract of the Disclosure have also been amended to conform to U.S. format.

An early and favorable action on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


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ILLUMINATION ARRANGEMENT FOR A STEREO MICROSCOPE

In stereo microscopy, external incident illumination arrangements in which direct illumination is arranged outside the microscope base body belong to prior art.

Such arrangements can be halogen lamps with reflector mirrors which are fastened to the stereo microscope support, to the pillar or to the stereo microscope base body itself and enable oblique incident illumination.

Cold-light illumination arrangements which are arranged, for example, at the pillar or at the stereo microscope support are known and are constructed, for instance, as flexible or semirigid one-armed or multiple-armed light guides with focusing optics. Without fastening to the stereo microscope base body or to the stand, there are one-armed or multiple-armed, semirigid goosenecks, as they are called, which are fastened exclusively to the cold-light source and can be optionally positioned spatially.

Further, cold-light ring lamps which are attachable to the front area of the stereo microscope are known and available, e.g., as 4-point ring lamps or slit ring lamps in different diameters and radiating angles. All of these external incident illumination arrangements ensure a highly differentiated incident illumination, i.e., the object examined through the stereo microscope can be optimally illuminated corresponding to its surface structure and spatial extension. A disadvantage in these external illumination arrangements is that they sometimes occupy considerable space in the object region, i.e., direct viewing of the object and free space for manipulation is sometimes severely limited.

A further disadvantage in these external illumination arrangements consists in that when the stereo microscope is fastened in special stands (e.g., machine holders, floor or wall stands) and as a result of the free spatial positioning of the stereo microscope which this involves, the light must first always be "tracked" separately (insofar as the illumination arrangement is not fastened to the stereo microscope base body itself). The disadvantages mentioned above can be avoided if the illumination arrangement itself can be successfully integrated in the stereo microscope base body in a suitable manner so as to save as much space as possible.

A number of different suggestions for solving this problem, some of them already published, with the aim of suitably integrating illumination systems directly in optical instruments (for example, in photographic cameras, video cameras, camcorders, microscopes, stereo microscopes, operation microscopes) are known internationally.

In stereo microscopy, internal incident illumination arrangements in which the light is coupled into (coaxial incident light principle) the observation channels via suitable beam splitting elements (prisms, splitter mirrors) inside the microscope base body are known from the prior art. In this connection, light can be generated by a conventional microscope incident light arrangement or via a cold-light source and light guides and can be transported until it is coupled into the observation channels via the above-mentioned beam splitting elements at different locations (e.g., above or below the stereo microscope pancratic or zoom system). Aside from the above-mentioned coaxial illumination arrangements which are fixedly integrated in the stereo microscope base body, there are also modular units which can be arranged, for example, in such a way that they can be divided between the stereo microscope pancratic system and the main objective (e.g., Zeiss telescope type stereo microscope with modular coaxial illumination device and flexible light guide input coupling, light guide connection to Schott cold-light source KL 1500). An advantage in the coaxial illumination arrangement is that the light is "guided along" with the stereo microscope base body and, in case of internal coupling in above the stereoscopic pancratic system, that there is an exact adaptation of the object field during zoom magnification. With internal coupling in below the stereoscopic pancratic system, the size of the illuminated object field is constant and is designed for the maximum object field that can be achieved with the pancratic system. A disadvantage in all of the above-mentioned arrangements with the coaxial incident light principle is the occurrence of strong reflections - especially with highly reflective object surfaces - and a resulting deterioration in image contrast through the coupling of light into the observation channels. The various possible arrangements for suppression of reflections with polarizing-optical means (e.g., antireflection device for Zeiss telescope type stereo microscopes) are also prior art. Known reflection suppression arrangements with polarizing-optical means have their own

disadvantage in that a considerable reduction in illumination intensity occurs due to the high absorptive power of the at least two polarizing filters that are required. Other internal incident illumination arrangements which are modified from this basic principle and employed in telescope type stereo microscopes use only the front main objective for coupling light into the observation beam paths or into an azimuthal plane of incidence different from the observation channels. In these arrangements which are modified from the basic principle, there also remains the problem of the formation of reflections and elimination thereof with polarizing-optical means. In stereo microscopy, the coaxial incident light principle is preferably applied only with planar or flat specimens (shallow depth of field) because, with this vertical illumination, only a poor contrast or a poor spatial visual impression can be achieved in case of objects with depth of field or objects with surface relief; a substantially improved contrast and spatial impression can be achieved by the shadow effect occurring with oblique illumination. The different internal illumination arrangements working in accordance with the coaxial incident light principle which were described above are used in conventional stereo microscopes (telescope type construction), operation microscopes, in medical equipment with stereoscopic observation (colposcopes, slit lamps) or sometimes in endoscopes.

The laid open application DE 196 40 352 A1, "Internal Illumination Device and Video Microscope System", describes an arrangement for coupling in light via beam splitting as is known in conventional brightfield incident light microscopy. Another arrangement provides integration of direct illumination (lamp with reflector mirrors) in a video device; in this case, light is transmitted via light guides into the object space with oblique illumination and there is a repeated coupling of light into the observation channel by light guides via beam splitting (coaxial incident light principle). The proposed integrated illumination arrangements which are known in part from the prior art are directed only to the combination of video microscope system with video equipment.

U.S. Patent 4,783,159, "Operation Microscope", describes a telescope type operation microscope with an integrated internal illumination arrangement for illuminating the operating field. In this connection, the light is principally coupled in between the zoom system (pancratic system) and the main objective. The

illumination system which is separately constructed in the operation microscope illuminates the operating field via the following optical elements: light guide → separate zoom system → projection lens → main objective. Through the use of different optical deflecting elements (reflection prisms), it is possible to illuminate the operating field via the main objective at different locations (axially or extra-axially, as desired), resulting in differentiated illumination of the operating field (e.g., the eye).

Patent EP 0 793 128 A1, "Illumination Structure in Microscope", describes a microscope (stereoscope in a parallel construction/macroscope) in which an internal illumination system is arranged behind the objective. Different arrangements are described by which light can be coupled in behind the objective, for example, on the optical axis of the objective between the observation channels (two pairs) with one illumination channel, between the observation channel pairs with two or more illumination channels, or coupling in light using areas of the observation optics separated by mounts.

Patent DE 39 06 555 A1, "Incident Light Object Illumination Device", describes an (external) illumination device which is arranged at an observation device and which comprises a plurality of individual light sources (e.g., self-luminous objects, glass fibers or back-lighting diaphragms) which are also switchable individually and which are arranged in an at least two-dimensional array whose center coincides with the optical axis of the observation imaging optics.

The patent "Epidark Illumination System" DE 39 29 768 A1 describes an Epidark illumination system, preferably for reflected light microscopes, in which light coming from a light source is guided between a sleeve and an objective lens for illuminating an object (arrangement similar to that in incident light darkfield arrangements). A very flat illumination of the object field can be achieved with this ring-shaped illumination arrangement.

Patent EP 0 50 940 A2, "Microscope Illuminating Apparatus", shows different microscope illumination arrangements for incident light brightfield and darkfield illumination and for transmitted light brightfield and darkfield illumination in which the coupling of light into the illumination-optical systems is carried out by fiber-optics among other means.

Patent DE 19523712 A1, "Stereo Microscope", describes a stereo microscope (telescope construction) which has an observation front lens and an illumination lens that are separate from one another. A beam of observation light emitted by an object point is directed parallel by the focusable front observation lens.

5 The illumination lens projects a beam of illumination light onto the object point. A position to be illuminated can be changed corresponding to the movement of an object point by the arrangement/focusing of the observation and illumination lens. It is the object of this special arrangement to achieve illumination which is as coaxial as possible, i.e., to adjust the smallest possible angle between the optical axis of the
10 illumination light and optical axis of the observation light (prevention of reflections).

It is the object of the invention to realize the illumination arrangement for stereo microscopes so as to have a minimum space requirement, but in such a way that the basic optical-mechanical construction is influenced only minimally and a bright, homogenous and reflection-free illumination of the maximum visible object
15 field is made possible independent from the position and observation direction of the stereo microscope.

This object is met through the features of the independent claims.
Preferred further developments are the subject matter of the dependent claims.

The invention will be explained more fully in the following with
20 reference to the schematic drawings.

Fig. 1 shows a bottom view of a stereo microscope according to the invention;

Fig. 2 shows the light guide used according to the invention;

Fig. 3 shows a schematic side view in section;

25 Fig. 4 shows a side view vertical to the side view according to Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 shows advantageous possible adjustments for illumination;

Fig. 6 shows an arrangement for contrasting, for example, fluorescence excitation via the spot illumination device.

An arrangement satisfying the objective stated above is achieved in that a fiber-optic illumination arrangement which is completely separate from the observation beam paths and has focusing optics is integrated in the stereo microscope base body, preferably through the arrangement of two spots in a plane orthogonal to the observation plane.

In Fig. 1, B1 and B2 represent the outlet openings or objective ends of two observation channels of a Greenough stereo microscope MI in the direction of the object. The microscope MI is connected with a stand S by a microscope support MT. The outlet openings BL1, BL2 of two light sources are arranged vertical to the connecting axis of the observation channels.

As a result of this orthogonal arrangement of the illumination channels, a bothersome imaging of the illumination channel after reflection in the object plane (critical in the case of highly reflective objects) in the second observation channel and a resulting deterioration in contrast are prevented. Further, in order to prevent reflections in the entire stereo microscope zoom range in case of highly reflective objects and to improve stereoscopic contrast, the illumination arrangement, as is shown in Figs. 4, 5, is advantageously arranged at an angle $\neq 0^\circ$, i.e., at an angle of $\approx 10^\circ \dots 12^\circ$ (=half-angle to center) to the optical axis of the microscope. Focussing optics FO which are arranged in front of the light guides and which light the object plane can be constructed as stationary systems (lighting of the maximum object field diameter) and, in principle, also as zoom systems (e.g., mechanically coupled with the observation zoom system) with variable object field diameter.

In order to achieve a maximum illumination intensity in the object plane, it is advantageous when the illumination is carried out via a twin light guide LL (see Fig. 2) provided with focusing optics FO and a superposition of the two individual spots takes place in the object plane. The two individual fiber bundles of branch V of the flexible twin light guide LL are joined inside the stereo microscope base body and exit as a continuous (prevention of light losses) one-arm, flexible light guide - provided with a sufficient length - via a strain relief ZE at a suitable location

on the stereo microscope base body. The light guide is then connected with an external cold-light source LQ via a standardized end piece ST. Glass light guides or plastic light guides or fluid light guides (especially advantageous in fluorescence illumination arrangements - see also Fig. 6) can be used as flexible light guides.

5 A possible arrangement of the integrated fiber-optic illumination arrangement in a Greenough type stereo microscope in a plane parallel to that of the observation channels (sectional view through an illumination channel) is shown in Fig. 3. The microscope MI is only indicated in dashed lines without the tube. The light guide LL is coupled into the microscope housing from above and has a strain relief ZE. Its branched part V advantageously extends entirely in the interior of the microscope housing between the lens groups L of the zoom system of the microscope; these lens groups L are movable on guides F and are partially stationary without the observation beam paths being vignettted in this way.

10 Fig. 4 shows that the two light guide ends provided with focussing optics FO form an angle to the optical axis of the microscope and accordingly advantageously overlap with respect to their illumination spots BS, so that a uniform bright illumination of the object in the object plane OE is achieved over the entire maximum object field OF.

15 This illumination principle is suited to Greenough type stereo microscopes and, in principle, for telescope type stereo microscopes. In order to prevent reflections (disadvantage of the known coaxial stereo microscope illumination arrangements), illumination can also be realized outside of auxiliary lens systems (Greenough systems) and objectives (telescope systems, typical illumination arrangements for operation microscopes). A stationary installation of
20 the illumination focusing optics provides optimal illumination of the object field for the stereo microscope without an auxiliary system (Greenough construction) or only for an auxiliary system/objective. A displacement and swiveling of the illumination focusing optics by mechanical guide elements and adjusting elements is required for adapting to different objectives/auxiliary systems). This is shown in Fig. 5.

25 Illumination optics FO which can be swiveled, displaced radially and focused in different directions via operator controls are shown here. The illumination focusing, i.e., the variable adaptation of the illumination spot to the observable object
30

field diameter, is realized by a focusing control FS which is either mechanically coupled with the observation zoom system or is carried out electronically via motor.

Different advantageous variants are described in the following:

5 A swiveling of the illumination focusing optics (varying the angle of incidence of the light spots in connection with B), actuation by suitable external operator controls;

B radial displacement of illumination focusing optics (varying the angle of incidence of the light spots in connection with A), actuation by suitable external operator controls;

10 C varying illuminated object field diameter by focusing; varying the distance between the light guide output and focusing optics with manual actuation or light-guide coupling into a separate illumination zoom system which is positively coupled mechanically with the observation zoom or is actuated by a motor-driven external control FS.

15 For this purpose, the illumination focusing system can advantageously be coupled with the zoom drive of the stereo microscope mechanically or electrically, i.e., the illuminated object field diameter is automatically variably adapted with actuation of the observation zoom system.

20 This illumination principle is also suitable for microscopy contrast methods. Fig. 6 shows an arrangement for fluorescence excitation via the spot illumination device by way of example. Based on the arrangements described in Fig. 4 or Fig. 5, fluorescence excitation via the spot focusing optics is possible when a filter holder FAA for receiving and changing filters is switched between the light guide end piece ST and the light source LQ in fluorescence excitation for receiving and changing excitation filters A (this filter changing location is already present in
25 many commercially available light sources, especially cold-light sources). Further, when a filter holder for blocking filters FAS is accommodated in the observation channels for changing blocking filters S, very good stereoscopic fluorescence contrast can be achieved in observation, i.e., high-contrast, reflection-free
30 observation is possible in oblique illumination by means of a complete decoupling of illumination channels and observation channels. Suitable light sources for fluorescence excitations in the visible spectral range are halogen cold-light sources

(e.g., Schott cold-light source KL 1500) or XBO (xenon very-high-pressure lamps, e.g., XBO 75 W); for UV fluorescence excitations, HBO (mercury very-high-pressure lamps, e.g., HBO 50 W or HBO 100 W) are suitable. A large number of different filter sets (comprising excitation filters and blocking filters) are offered by filter manufacturers and stereo microscope manufacturers for a wide variety of different applications in fluorescence stereo microscopy. The coupling in of light via light guides is advantageous for stereo microscope observation in any spatial direction (e.g., special stands for conservationists) with fluorescence excitation because the above-mentioned very-high-pressure lamps with a rigid coupling to the stereo microscope without light guides would be bothersome for the observer because of its considerable heat development (risk of burn injury when touched); moreover, according to manufacturer's instructions, the very-high-pressure lamps may only be operated in a vertical setup position (these lamps are destroyed when sharply inclined). In the arrangement according to the invention shown in Fig. 6, the light source can remain at a stationary location (for example, fastened to the special stand) and the stereo microscope can be spatially oriented in any manner such that it is connected with the light source via the light guide.

Trial Results:

Incident illumination as shown in Fig. 1 to Fig. 4 is integrated in the Zeiss Stemi 1000 base body while maintaining a working distance of 4" (110 mm). The two illumination optical systems - arranged in a north-south direction - were positioned at an angle of $2 \times 8^\circ$ to realize an oblique incident illumination with extensive decoupling of the observation channels. An image quality which is substantially improved (no bothersome incident light reflections in the upper zoom area) over costly coaxial incident illumination arrangements (minimizing of reflections with polarizing-optic means) was achieved with this arrangement.

The following performance features were determined in the prototype:

a) Bright, homogeneous lighting, illumination with Schott KL 1500e cold-light source; an illumination angle of $2 \times 8^\circ$ was realized in the prototype; in this way, it was possible to achieve an illumination angle which was substantially smaller

than with externally mounted lighting with highly inclined incident light (e.g., Schott point light or ring light: 18°, light 10: 35°).

5 b) Substantially higher-contrast illumination compared with conventional coaxial illumination arrangements with beam splitting (illumination angle 0°, problem of lightening single-reflections which cannot be entirely eliminated in spite of antireflection arrangement) through complete separation of observation and illumination beam paths.

10 c) By means of complete integration of illumination in the stereo microscope base body, the full working distance (4" with Stemi 1000) is retained: advantage over externally mounted cold-light components by which the working distance is limited and direct, free viewing of observation object is obstructed.

15 d) All external stereo microscope interfaces are retained (Ø76 mm as internationally standardized receptacle - Ø, receptacle - Ø for external cold-light components, coupling thread for auxiliary systems), accordingly, there are no limitations with respect to the variability which has been achieved.

20 e) By means of integration, illumination does not need to be tracked in case of changing observation locations (e.g., special stands for MEG applications, scanning of large object fields with cantilever stands, e.g., in textile industries, restoration or conservation stands with optional spatial orientation of the stereo microscope base body) and free viewing of the object was retained.

In view of the extremely confined basic construction of the stereo microscope, the following alternatives are seen for modifying the above-mentioned embodiment examples (Fig. 1 to Fig. 4) with necessary design limitations for spot illumination:

- 25 - omission of an illumination channel, illumination only with a spot from north or south direction;
- instead of a flexible light guide, a light-conducting rod or internally coated light-conducting tube could also be used, at which a flexible standard light guide (e.g., for KL 200) can be coupled in at the upper end so as to be
- 30 exchangeable (an advantage in case of reasonable transmission losses);

- omission of focusing optics, i.e., an object field of ≈ 160 mm is illuminated (relatively homogeneous illumination $\approx \varnothing 100$ mm) by means of the high light guide aperture ($A \approx 0.66$ with A2 type fiber) at a free working distance of 90 mm; the visible illumination intensity in the viewing field, particularly in the upper zoom area, is then appreciably lower than with an adapted illumination of the object viewing field, but it is still judged sufficient (advantage of large-area illumination of object field with object manipulation and object positioning with the naked eye, i.e., the light is still delivered by the Stemi).
- 5



Patent Claims:

1. Illumination arrangement for a stereo microscope, preferably a Greenough type stereo microscope, comprising at least one, preferably two illumination channels which are arranged in a plane which is arranged essentially orthogonally with respect to the plane of the two observation channels.
2. Illumination arrangement according to claim 1 in a Greenough type stereo microscope with two light channels in the interior of the microscope housing outside of the observation beam paths.
3. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the light channels are guided around the observation optics.
4. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the illumination direction is carried out at an angle to the optical axis of the microscope, so that no direct light falls in the observation channels.
5. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the illumination is carried out via at least one light guide.
6. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the light guide is a flexible glass light guide and/or plastic light guide and/or fluid light guide.
7. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the light guide extends at least partially in the interior of the microscope housing.
8. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the illumination is carried out via the light guide ends.

9. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the illumination is carried out via illumination optics arranged following the light guide end.

10. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the illumination optics are arranged so as to be adjustable and/or displaceable and/or swivelable with respect to the image scale as zoom system.

11. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein a hand-actuated and/or motor-operated control is provided for adjusting the illumination optics.

12. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein, when the illumination optics are adjusted as a zoom system, this adjustment is coupled to the adjustment of the microscope zoom system.

13. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the illumination is carried out via a light guide which branches to generate the two light channels.

14. Illumination arrangement according to claim 13, wherein the branching takes place entirely within the microscope housing.

15. Illumination arrangement according to one of claims 13 or 14, wherein the branches of the light guide are guided around the observation channels.

16. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein the light guide is connected with a cold-light source arranged outside of the microscope.

17. Illumination arrangement according to at least one of the preceding claims, wherein a fluorescence excitation is carried out via the illumination channels.

18. Illumination arrangement according to claim 17, wherein at least one light guide is connected with a light source which is arranged outside of the microscope and which is suitable for fluorescence excitations in combination with exchangeable excitation filters.

19. Illumination arrangement according to one of claims 17 or 18, wherein a filter holder for excitation filters is provided between the light source and the light guide and a filter holder for blocking filters is provided in the observation beam path.

Abstract

Illumination arrangement for a stereo microscope, preferably a Greenough type stereo microscope, comprising at least one, preferably two illumination channels which are arranged in a plane which is arranged essentially orthogonally with respect to the plane of the two observation channels, preferably with two light channels in the interior of the microscope housing outside of the observation beam paths, wherein the light channels are guided around the observation optics.

Fig. 1

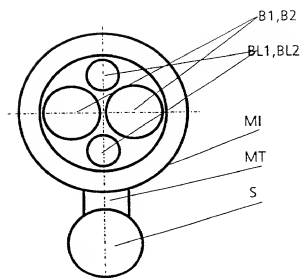


Fig. 2

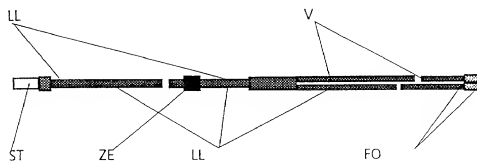


Fig. 4

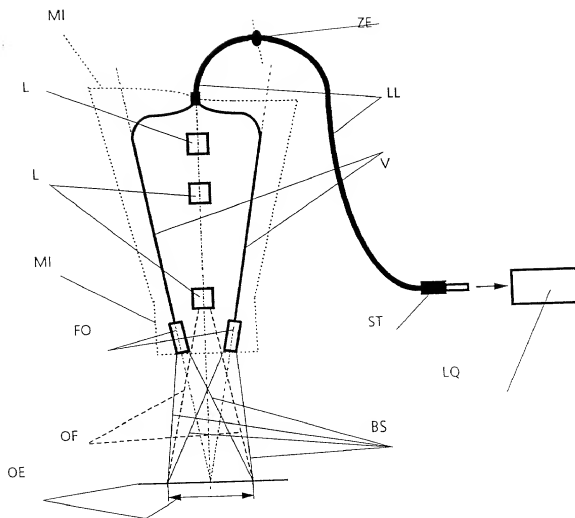


Fig. 5

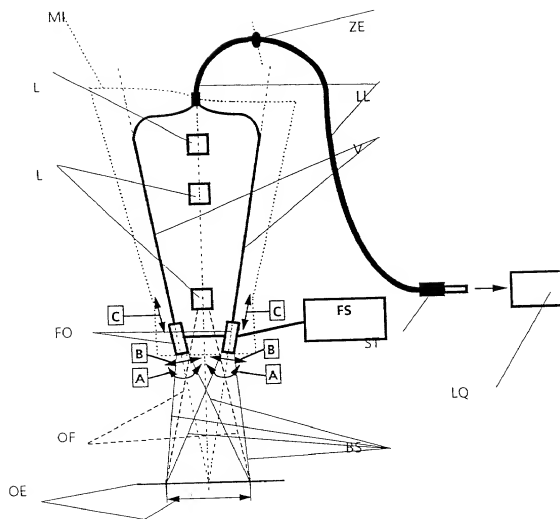
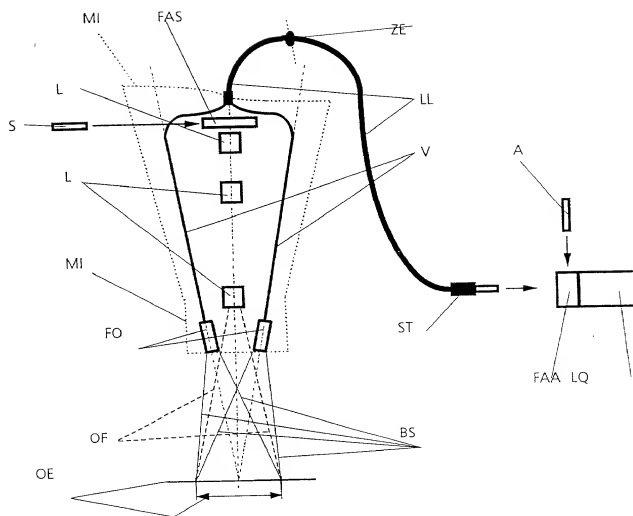


Fig. 6



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
FOR PATENT APPLICATION

FILE NO. GK-ZEI-3075

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that: my residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name; that I verily believe that I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or a joint inventor (if plural inventors are named) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

ILLUMINATION ARRANGEMENT FOR A STEREO MICROSCOPE

the specification of which

☐ is attached hereto.

☒ was filed on January 14, 2000 as United States patent application Serial Number 09/462,961.

☒ was filed on May 5, 1999 as PCT international patent application No. PCT/EP99/03070
and was amended on _____ (if any).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information known to be material to patentability in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)

COUNTRY	APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (day, month, year)	PRIORITY CLAIMED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 119
Germany	198 22 255.6	18 May 1998	YES <u>X</u> NO _____

I hereby appoint McAULAY NISSEN GOLDBERG KIEL & HAND and the members of the firm: Lloyd McAulay, Reg. No. 20,423; J. Harold Nissen, Reg. No. 17,283; Jules E. Goldberg, Reg. No. 24,408; Gerald H. Kiel, Reg. No. 25,116; Francis C. Hand, Reg. No. 22,280; Eugene LeDonne, Reg. No. 35,930; Mark Montague, Reg. No. 36,612; Stephen Chin, Reg. No. 39,938; Arthur Dresner, Reg. No. 24,403; and F. Aaron Dubberley, Reg. No. 41,001; as attorneys with full power of substitution and revocation to prosecute all business in the Patent & Trademark Office connected therewith and to receive all correspondence.

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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RESIDENCE			COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP		
POST OFFICE ADDRESS					

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